



DETROIT DISTRICT
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
BOX 1027
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48231-1027

FEBRUARY 2009 GREAT LAKES WATER LEVEL SUMMARY

LAKE SUPERIOR

Lake Superior continued its period of seasonal decline during February, with a monthly mean water level of 600.72 feet. This level was 2 inches lower than January's level, 7 inches below its long term average (LTA) but 3 inches higher than last year. Lake Superior was also 5 inches lower than its chart datum elevation. Precipitation across the Lake Superior basin was 77% of average in February, but near average over the last 12 months. The outflow from Lake Superior into the St. Marys River was below average in February. The latest 6-month forecast shows Lake Superior's water level 4 inches above those of a year ago through April, then similar to last year in May through August. Lake Superior's water level is expected to remain below chart datum through May. The lake will also remain 5 to 7 inches below its LTA over the next 6 months.

LAKE MICHIGAN-HURON

Lake Michigan-Huron remained steady during the month of February, largely due to another large snow melt event and some heavy rain. Lake Michigan-Huron's February monthly mean water level was 577.46 feet, 10 inches higher than last year, but 11 inches below its LTA. Lake Michigan-Huron is within an inch of its chart datum elevation of 577.50 feet and is expected to remain 2 to 13 inches above datum through August. Precipitation in the Lake Michigan-Huron basin was about an inch above average in February and 3.5 inches above average over the last 12 months. Lake Michigan-Huron's outflow into the St. Clair River was below average in February. Lake Michigan-Huron is forecasted to remain 5 to 12 inches above its level of a year ago but 8 to 10 inches below its LTA over the next 6 months.

LAKE ST. CLAIR

Lake St. Clair's February monthly mean water level was 573.98 feet, the same level as last month. Like in the Michigan-Huron basin, snowmelt and rainfall held the level steady. February's level was 4 inches higher than last year and 6 inches above average. The outflow from Lake St. Clair into the Detroit River was above average. The latest 6 month forecast shows Lake St. Clair 1 to 3 inches above than last year's levels through June, then near last year in July and August. The lake is expected to be 2 inches above average in March then 1 to 4 inches below its LTA through August.

LAKE ERIE

Lake Erie's water level rose in February due to runoff and rainfall. Its February mean water level was 571.10 feet; 1 inch higher than last month, 3 inches above its LTA and an inch below last year. Precipitation in the Lake Erie basin was almost an inch above average in February and 4 inches above average during the last 12 months. Lake Erie's outflow into the Niagara River was above average in February. The latest forecast shows Lake Erie remaining 1 to 4 inches below last year's levels through August. Lake Erie is projected to be 2 to 6 inches above its LTA through May then similar to its LTA in June, July and August.

LAKE ONTARIO

Like in January, Lake Ontario's water level rose during February. Its mean water level of 245.47 feet was 2 inches higher than last month's level, 3 inches above last year's level and 9 inches above its LTA. Precipitation in the basin was about a half inch below average in February but about 2 inches above average during the last 12 months. The lake's outflow into the St. Lawrence River was above average in January. Lake Ontario is expected to be 1 inch above last year's level in March, and then fall to 2 to 7 inches below last year's level through August. It is forecasted to remain 2 to 9 inches above its LTA through August.